

# Trump & the Press – A Death Struggle

Alerting the press that he would deal with the birther issue at the opening of his new hotel, the Donald, after treating them to an hour of tributes to himself from Medal of Honor recipients, delivered.

“Hillary Clinton and her campaign of 2008 started the birther controversy. I finished it. ... President Barack Obama was born in the United States. Period.”

The press went orbital.

“Trump Gives Up a Lie But Refuses to Repent” howled the headline over the lead story in The New York Times.

Its editorial called Donald Trump a “reckless, cynical bully” spreading political poison in an “absurdist presidential campaign,” adding that Trump is the “ultimate mountebank” using a “Big Lie” that “made him the darling of the wing nuts and racists” and “nativist hallucinators.”

You get the drift.

While Trump’s depiction of the birther controversy was ... inexact ... there was truth in it. Obama’s campaign did charge the Clinton campaign with drawing press attention to that photo of Obama in traditional Somali garb. Apparently, Sid Blumenthal did push a McClatchy bureau chief to search for Obama’s birth records in Kenya.

Tim Kaine was wailing on Sunday about how “painful” Trump’s birtherism has been to African-Americans. And Democrats and the media are pledging not to let it go, but to exploit Trump’s attempt to “delegitimize” Obama’s presidency.

These are crocodile tears. Obama gave the game away Saturday

night. At the Black Caucus's annual gala, says The Washington Post, a "beaming" Obama "gleefully" had the attendees rolling in "laughter" over Trump's concession. "With just 124 days to go," mocked Obama, "we got that thing resolved."

Many news organizations will go along with the game. For many appear to be all in on Clinton's depiction of half of Trump's supporters as a "basket of deplorables" who are "racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, Islamophobic ... haters."

Yet one wonders. Do the major media understand that in their determination, bordering on desperation, to kill Trump, they are killing their credibility? And as they are losing credibility they are losing the country.

According to a new Gallup poll, distrust of the press has hit an all-time high. Half the nation's Democrats still trust the media, but only one-in-three independents and one-in seven Republicans, 14 percent, believe the media are truthful, honest and fair.

When, early in his presidency, Obama jokingly referred to the White House Correspondents Association dinner as his political base, Americans now believe he was not exaggerating the case.

And the more the media vent their detestation of Trump, the more Trump's supporters revel in their discomfort. "We love him most of all for the enemies he has made," said backers of Grover Cleveland in 1884. Trump's folks feel that way about the national press.

America's media seem utterly lacking in introspection. Do they understand why so many people hate them so? Do they care? Are they so smugly self-righteous and self-regarding they cannot see?

Take the birther issue again. According to a January HuffPost/YouGov poll, an astonishing 53 percent of all Republicans, 30 percent of all independents, and even 10

percent of Democrats still believe Barack Obama was born outside the USA.

What does this say about the persuasiveness of the press?

Indeed, what does it say about the idea that universal suffrage is the best way to determine the leadership of a republic?

In 2016, America faces serious issues – a rising deficit and escalating debt, the explosion of entitlements, the resurgence of Russian power, Chinese military expansionism in the South and East China seas, North Korea's development of nuclear missiles, and Afghanistan.

Now consider the issues that have transfixed the media this election season:

The birther issue, David Duke, the KKK, a Mexican-American judge, Black Lives Matter, white cops, the "Muslim ban," the Battle Flag, the "alt-right," the national anthem, Trump's refusals to recant his blasphemies against the dogmas of political correctness, or to "apologize."

What does the continual elevation of such issues, and the acrimony attendant to them, tell us?

America is bitterly and irreparably divided over race, ideology faith, history and culture, and Trump's half of the nation rejects the modernist gospel that America's diversity and multiculturalism are her greatest treasures.

To the contrary, Trump's half wants secure borders, "extreme vetting" of immigrants, especially from the Mideast, and foreign and trade policies marked by an "Americanism" that seems to be an antonym for globalism.

They want America to be "great again," and they believe she was once, and is not now.

No matter who wins in November, America is going to face a divide unseen in decades. If Donald Trump wins, he will confront a resident media more hateful than that which confronted Richard Nixon in 1968.

If Hillary Clinton wins, she will come to office distrusted and disbelieved by most of her countrymen, half of whom she has maligned either as “deplorables” or pitiful souls in need of empathy.

Not for half a century has the idea of “one nation under God, indivisible,” seemed so distant.

Patrick J. Buchanan is the author of the new book “The Greatest Comeback: How Richard Nixon Rose From Defeat to Create the New Majority.” To find out more about Patrick Buchanan and read features by other Creators writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators website at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).

COPYRIGHT 2016 CREATORS.COM

Last Updated: Monday, Sep 19, 2016 13:08:21 -0700